



## PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION PLAN FOR THE CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE AND BERNALILLO COUNTY SEPTEMBER 2004 NEWSLETTER ISSUE # 2

### COA AND BERNALILLO PROGRESS ON PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION PLAN

The City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County are in the process of developing a Pre-disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan with assistance from URS, a national consulting firm with expertise in hazard mitigation planning. The Villages of Tijeras and Los Ranchos de Albuquerque are also involved in the creation of this plan. Since Bernalillo County has a diverse population of residents living different environments, this Plan will benefit from a wide range of perspectives and suggestions on how to make the County more disaster-resistant.



Joe Stone, 2003

In September the wildfire committee, consisting of fire chiefs and fire marshals from municipalities as well as NM State Forestry and US Forest Service personnel met with the City of Albuquerque Open Space Superintendent, Jay Hart. Mr. Hart informed the group of the history of the Bosque the resulting danger of catastrophic wildfires, and of on-going and future projects in the Bosque. Federal funding for fuel reduction and re-vegetation has been allocated for the Middle Rio Grande Bosque. The Army Corps of Engineers are leading many of the projects in the area, including Tingley Wetlands and Rio Grande Nature Center restoration. The City of Albuquerque has identified and prioritized 63 sectors along the Rio Grande for fuel reduction, non-native vegetation thinning, Jetty Jack removal, debris removal, burn restoration, and herbicide treatment. Creating additional access routes for emergency equipment and personnel was identified as a priority, as was monitoring and upkeep of restored sites.



In early September citizens were invited to three Open Houses to learn about Pre-Disaster Mitigation activities in Bernalillo County and to provide input and feedback in the development of the Plan. Meetings were held in Albuquerque, the Villages of Los Ranchos de Albuquerque, and Tijeras.

Citizen concerns and input included:

- Enforce compliance of sewer connection in Village of Los Ranchos de Albuquerque due to septic tank contamination of surface and ground water during flash floods.
- Access for emergency management vehicles in areas with little or no egress.
- Consider requiring new home construction in East Mountains to have sprinkler systems.
- Post severe weather/lightning safety instructions at ball fields.



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### WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- The Core Planning Team is also soliciting input from the Bernalillo County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), County, City, and Village planning departments, as well as other federal state and local agencies, and experts on drought, floods, hazardous materials, earthquakes and GIS.
- Don Scott, Bernalillo County Emergency Manager, Karen Takai, Fire Information Officer for the Cibola National Forest, and Jennifer Nelson of URS recorded an informational video to be aired on Gov TV, Channel 17 in Albuquerque. It was recorded at the Ranger lookout station in the Sandia Mountains. The spot highlights the plan process, discusses wildfire, and other identified threats and invites additional public input to the draft plan.



### WHAT'S NEXT?

- The Core Planning Team will identify the capabilities and resources of our communities that can be used for hazard mitigation.
- The Core Planning Team will incorporate information learned at the public meetings to address the concerns of the community's citizens.
- After the hazards to the community and capabilities of the community are identified, the planning team will propose mitigation measures to help strengthen the community.
- URS with COA/BernCo will publish a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan for use in future hazard planning in Bernalillo County.
- **For more information on the project on the City's and County's web sites <http://www.bernco.gov/live/> or <http://www.cabq.gov/>.**

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